

lives of students and families from the Bedford community.

Each year, the Department of Education recognizes the academic excellence of a select few elementary, middle, and high schools across the nation through the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program. In order to be recognized as a Blue Ribbon School, schools must demonstrate that their institution leads students of all backgrounds to master meaningful and challenging material. The Blue Ribbon designation process is highly selective, with only two schools across the State of New Hampshire receiving a 2021 Blue Ribbon designation.

Receiving its first Blue Ribbon award in 2012, Memorial Elementary School has shown a consistent dedication to each student's learning and wellbeing that has not gone unrecognized. Being named a National Blue Ribbon School is no small feat, and I am proud to serve and represent a school district with such a strong commitment to academic excellence.

On behalf of my constituents in New Hampshire's First Congressional District, I want to congratulate and thank everyone who has helped make Memorial Elementary School the exemplary institution that it is today.

GENERAL RAYMOND ODIERNO
MEMORIAM

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 12, 2021

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, my thoughts and prayers go out to the family of General Ray Odierno, who passed away over the weekend. I was grateful to have met the General in my capacity as a Member of Congress and fellow veteran, and appreciate his service to our country.

As reported in the New York Post:

Gen. Raymond T. Odierno, a New Jersey native and former Army Chief of Staff, who led the successful "surge" that turned both the tide of battle and American public perception in the Iraq War, died Friday at age 67.

"The general died after a brave battle with cancer; his death was not related to COVID," his family said in a statement. There were no further details given.

The Association of the United States Army reported the general had a lengthy record and did several tours overseas.

"During more than 37 years of Army service, he commanded units at every echelon, from platoon to theater, and served in Germany, Albania, Kuwait, Iraq and across the U.S.," the report stated.

Odierno, who rose to the rank of four-star general, served three tours of duty in Iraq and it was under his command that elements of the 4th Infantry Division captured Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein on Dec. 13, 2003.

"Caught like a rat," Odierno famously stated, in one of the signature moments of America's post-9/11 military conflicts.

"He was in the bottom of a hole with no way to fight back," Odierno, then a major general, told global media, as images were broadcast around the world of the once-feared former dictator being dragged out of hiding by U.S. troops.

Odierno was born Sept. 8, 1954, in Rockaway Township, N.J., the son of a World War II Army sergeant and working mother. A

star high school athlete, the towering 6-foot-5 inch Odierno played both baseball and football at the U.S. Military Academy. He graduated from West Point in 1976.

Odierno was charged by the Bush administration in 2007 with commanding the controversial so-called "surge" in the Iraq War.

The rapid deployment of tens of thousands of additional troops proved a success in quelling violence in Iraq and reducing American casualties and boosted Odierno's profile in military and global affairs.

He gained further international prominence in 2008, after replacing Gen. David Petraeus as the commander of the multinational force in Iraq.

Odierno was known within military circles for his deep commitment to the Army and to those soldiers, and their families, killed and wounded in service of their nation.

"Ray firmly believes soldiers aren't in the Army, they are the Army," Army Secretary John McHugh said at Odierno's retirement ceremony in 2105, the Army Times reported. "It's always been his No. 1 job to serve them well and serve them honorably. Whether it's fighting in Tikrit or visiting a hospital bed at Walter Reed, he's led with a quick mind, calloused hands and a servant's spirit."

Odierno is survived by his wife Linda, who he met in high school, as well as their three children, including retired Capt. Tony Odierno, a combat veteran, and their families.

MILITARY SUPPORT FOR
FIGHTING WILDFIRES ACT

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 12, 2021

Mr. GARAMENDI. Madam Speaker, today I introduce the "Military Support for Fighting Wildfires Act" with Representative SARA JACOBS (D-CA53) as the original cosponsor. This comprehensive bill would improve the military's support for civilian emergency response and provide Congressional authorization for the California Air National Guard's "FireGuard" program in partnership with the U.S. Air Force and the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency.

The American military has incredible capabilities for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR). As chairman of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness, I believe that these capabilities can and should be used to support civilian emergency response to wildfires and other natural disasters with the appropriate safeguards for privacy and classified collection means.

I also believe that excess military aircraft—including the seven Coast Guard HC-130H aircraft directed by Congress for transfer to the U.S. Forest Service and the State of California for wildfire response, following reconfiguration by the Air Force—should be made available for civilian wildland firefighting efforts. As western states like California face increasingly severe and frequent wildfires due to man-made climate change, we need all the help we can get from our federal government including the military.

That is exactly what my "Military Support for Fighting Wildfires Act" would accomplish. This comprehensive legislation builds upon the work of many members of California's Congressional delegation, including Representatives ADAM B. SCHIFF (D-CA28), SALUD O.

CARBAJAL (D-CA24), and ZOE LOFGREN (D-CA19) and U.S. Senators DIANNE FEINSTEIN (D-CA) and ALEX PADILLA (D-CA). I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues as our state confronts the harsh realities of a new, year-round fire season due to manmade climate change.

The California National Guard has used remotely piloted and unmanned aircraft systems, such as the MQ-9, for life-saving emergency operations in the past. However, these joint missions have only been completed a handful of times due to the lengthy approval process requiring the Secretary of Defense to sign off on each of these requests in advance.

To address this hurdle, I secured a provision (Section 519C) in the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (Public Law 116-283) directing the U.S. Department of Defense to review its approval process for the use of unmanned aircraft systems by the National Guard in support of civilian emergency responders. The House Armed Services Committee received these recommendations under my Congressionally directed report in April 2021, and I expect the DOD to implement these changes fully.

Madam Speaker, I look forward to working with you and other members of the California delegation to advance these key reforms in my "Military Support for Fighting Wildfires Act." I encourage all members to join me in cosponsoring this commonsense bill.

RECOGNIZING THE MONTH OF OCTOBER AS MANUFACTURING MONTH

HON. JOHN KATKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 12, 2021

Mr. KATKO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to join the Manufacturing Association of Central New York (MACNY) in recognizing the month of October as Manufacturing Month. This month serves to highlight the manufacturing industry's significant contributions to Central New York and our nation, while encouraging young people to pursue opportunities in manufacturing.

Importantly, in my district in Central New York, the Manufacturing Association of Central New York and its members are significant job creators for our region and drivers of the economy. Collectively, the organization is made up of over 300 businesses, which employ over 50,000 workers. It's not an understatement to say our regional economy depends on the Manufacturing Association of Central New York and its members.

Beyond Central New York, manufacturing has a rich history in the United States. Manufacturing grew our economy, built the middle class, and helped us modernize. This industry was an important part of our past, and should be a part of our future. That's why today, it's increasingly important to celebrate the manufacturing industry, educate young people about careers in manufacturing, and expand educational opportunities to ensure highly-skilled positions are filled.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues in the House join me during the month of October in recognizing Manufacturing Month as well as the great contributions of the Manufacturing Association of Central New York.